

Maine Medical Association

July 1, 2010

The Honorable Michael H. Michaud
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: THE AMERICA RX ACT

Dear Congressman Michaud:

I am writing on behalf of more than 3300 Maine physicians who comprise the Maine Medical Association (MMA) to applaud your introduction of *The America Rx Act*, your most recent effort to make prescription drugs affordable for all Americans. The MMA is a professional organization whose mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine citizens. Maine physicians very much appreciate your long-term commitment to ensuring access to affordable prescription medications and other medical care dating back to your service in the Maine legislature. We enthusiastically endorse *The America Rx Act* initiative to allow the Secretary of Health & Human Services to negotiate prescription drug rebates for individuals who have no health care coverage or inadequate health care coverage. Too many Americans put off purchasing medications ordered by their physicians in order to meet the basic necessities of life. Your proposal will give them the opportunities for drug discounts available only to those in private insurance plans today.

The MMA membership wishes you the best of luck with *The America Rx Act* and we stand ready to assist you in your efforts.

Sincerely,

David B. McDermott, M.D., M.P.H.

Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine

July 1, 2010

The Honorable Michael Michaud
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Michaud:

On behalf of the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine, I am pleased to offer our support of the America Rx Act that will make prescription drugs affordable for all Americans. The Alliance represents home care and hospice providers throughout the State of Maine who serve diverse populations, many who are medically and financially vulnerable. Providing prescription drugs to those who otherwise would not have access assures the most appropriate allocation of our limited health care resources. And as is our goal in home care, we are able to keep individuals at home rather than in unnecessary institutional settings.

The Alliance is grateful for your leadership and applauds your efforts to address the need for affordable prescription drugs for all Americans. We sincerely thank you for your commitment to ensuring high quality, cost effective health care for all Americans and appreciate the opportunity to support you in this effort.

Sincerely,

Vicki Purgavie
Executive Director
Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine
20 Middle Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

Maine Hospital Association

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Michael Michaud
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Michaud:

The Maine Hospital Association is pleased to announce its support for the America Rx Act that will make prescription drugs affordable for all Americans.

As you know, the State of Maine has already taken steps in its Maine Rx Plus program to ensure that everyone has access to affordable prescription drugs. More than 46,000 Mainers are enrolled in Maine RX program. Before the program was enacted, it was estimated that many low income Mainers spent as much as 50 percent of their income on prescription drugs.

The America Rx Act would build upon state programs like Maine Rx and allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate prescription drug rebates for individuals across the country, thus increasing the pool and allowing for greater discounts for the low-income individuals who do not already have access to these discounts in private insurance.

Maine hospitals know that many of the patients we see could have avoided a costly hospitalization if only they had access to affordable medication. Negotiating the best price from pharmaceutical companies lowers the cost of medicine without burdening the taxpayer. Using the federal government's power to negotiate the best price for drugs makes fiscal sense.

We are grateful to your efforts to provide access to affordable medications for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Steven R. Michaud
President
Maine Hospital Association
33 Fuller Road
Augusta, Maine 04330

Maine Health Care Association

July 1, 2010

The Honorable Michael Michaud
1724 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Michaud:

On behalf of the Maine Health Care Association (MHCA) and its 250 long term care providers, we are pleased to support the America Rx Act. As you know, MHCA represents both nursing facilities and assisted and independent living facilities. We believe this legislation will have the greatest benefit to the latter group of residents as they rely on fixed incomes to cover ever-increasing living and health care expenses.

As we understand it, the America Rx Act would build upon state programs like the Maine Rx program to allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate prescription drug rebates for individuals across the country. This Act will benefit the 46,000 Mainers already enrolled in the Maine Rx program by providing access to even deeper drug discounts. It will also expand this benefit to all Americans who do not have access to these discounts in their current private insurance plans.

As you know, the elderly and disabled citizens of our country rely on many medications regularly and in long term care, some residents take up to 9 or 10 prescriptions daily. Harnessing the buyer power of the federal government will undoubtedly serve to increase competition among the nation's pharmacies, while consumers benefit from the best market prices. We also believe this Act is an important bridge to address skyrocketing prescription drug costs as the government continues implementing the provisions of the recently enacted health care reform bill.

This Act will be crucial in ensuring that all Americans have access to the same advantages that only people in private insurance plans get today. MHCA applauds you for your ongoing commitment to ensuring a high quality, cost effective health care system, which must include affordable prescription drugs for all Americans. Your leadership and sponsorship of the America Rx Act are indicative of your dedication to these goals and we are pleased to support this effort.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Erb
President and Chief Executive Office
317 State Street
Augusta, ME 04039

Maine Primary Care Association

July 2, 2010

The Honorable Michael H. Michaud
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Michaud:

On behalf of our Board President, Reverend Bob Carlson, and our Public Policy Chair, Norman Fournier, the Maine Primary Care Association is pleased to endorse the America Rx Act. Access to affordable and effective medications is crucial to the achievement of patient-centered health homes and improved health status for the population of Maine, and the entirety of our country.

Community health centers work each and every day to facilitate access to clinically indicated and effective pharmaceuticals for their patients whether through connecting patients with MaineRx, manufacturers' PAP programs, and/or utilization of the 340B program. This piece of legislation is a necessary vehicle to add an important policy and operations arrow in the quiver of the Secretary of the DHHS and ultimately for the underserved people of Maine and the whole of our United States.

Thanks so much for your leadership on this and many other issues of critical importance to community health centers.

Sincerely,

Kevin Lewis, MPP
Chief Executive Officer
Maine Primary Care Association
73 Winthrop Street
Augusta, ME 04330